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FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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SECURITY: UNCLASSIFIED PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO: Department of State

FROM: LAGOS 196 April 27, 1950

REF:

no action required
JMOB 5/12/50.

SUBJECT: Political and Economic Events in Nigeria for the Two Weeks Ending April 22, 1950.

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POLITICAL

In addition to the usual spate of political articles and editorials in the local press (that are mostly published on the Nigerian coast and that clearly reach only the small literate fraction of the African population) which are covered by the Economic and Public Affairs divisions of the Consulate General in regular despatches, one item is worth notice.

Seretse Khama Case

There have been many references to the decision of the Colonial Office preventing Seretse KHAMA from assuming the chieftainship of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland because of his marriage to a white woman (British). The Anglican Bishop of Lagos (Mr. L. G. VINING) took the opportunity to discuss mixed marriages in print. He did not condemn them per se although he expected that as economic conditions of submerged race elements might improve mixed marriages probably would not be frowned upon. He did point out that the Khama case was different because Khama owed duties of kingship to his tribe and should have taken into consideration the advisability of obtaining a consort from among his tribeswomen.

Foreign Consular Representation in Lagos

France is the only country, except the United States, that is represented in this city by a professional officer. The French representative is usually detailed from his country's Colonial Service and given the rather shadowy local rank of Consul. "French Consul" George TOUROT has just left and has been succeeded by a young officer named R. TEISSIER du CROS whose rank apparently is equivalent to that of a Chancellier de Consulat but he is locally styled the French Consul.

New Africa Party

Announcement has been made of the founding of the New

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Africa Party (strength unknown) which asserts it will ally itself with all forces aiming at the independence of Nigeria. The new party is not yet affiliated with the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons but a leader has stated that the two groups support each other.

ECONOMIC

Land Reclamation Project

The Northern Provinces Regional Development Board has decided to undertake a survey to determine the feasibility of reclaiming large tracts of potential farm land on the fringes of Lake Chad which appears to be drying up. Indications are that the reclaimed land will be used for the planting of rice.

Visit of Mr. Mack Verhyden, Caterpillar Tractor Representativ

Mr. Mack VERHYDEN is now touring Nigeria as representat of the Caterpillar Tractor Company. He is especially interes in visiting timber and mining firms, the only two industries in Nigeria which under existing exchange regulations are allowed t import heavy American machinery.

Cargo to and from the United States

Mr. Clifford SHIELDS, a Director of the Farrell Lines, has just come from New York to visit this area and Mr. Ewing T. BONN, the Lines' Resident Representative at Takoradi, Gold Coast, came to Lagos to meet him. Their opinion regarding cargo prospects agrees with that of Mr. L. T. BREMMER, the Resident Representative of the American West African Line (Barber Line), that export cargo to the United States is and is expected to continue to be very good, that United States bottoms are obtaining a substantial share, in fact about all they can handle at present, and that import cargo from the United States is small with slight prospect for improvement which is understandable in view of Devaluation, West African Exchange Controls and similar impediments.

Coco Cola Project for Nigeria

Mr. C. C. BRADY, an American from South Africa whom it is understood served with the U.S. Naval Attache in the Union during the war and who now represents Coco Cola in the Union, has just visited this country. His organization has a project to build up a plant to cost about £75,000, obtaining equipment from the United Kingdom, and to ship Coco Cola extract from South Africa to be bottled in Nigeria. It is thought that the plant will take about three years to build. It is tentatively planned that it will be operated in this area by the United Africa Company in

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association with South African Coco Cola, an American interest. According to Mr. Brady, none of the local soft drinks are really potable and many are really unfit for human consumption.

Small Export Items

Mr. Lee FRANKLIN, an American representing . wtown Jackson Co., Inc., 24 Stone Street, New York City (reference various telegrams sent in February 1950) called at the Consulate General to explain the many difficulties he is experiencing in obtaining export produce from this area. Nevertheless he seems to be doing a fairly good business while his troubles appear to be those characteristic of this area and about which he was warned before he decided to visit Nigeria.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Drs. STRUTHERS and MORISON of the Rockefeller Foundation who have been touring Africa have just paid a flying visit to Nigeria to make a quick on-the-spot survey of medical education facilities partly with reference to the Yellow Fever Research Institute conducted by the Foundation near Lagos which is being guided by Dr. Richard G. HAHN who is shortly leaving Nigeria for the United States. The opinion of the two visitors is interesting. They consider that most of Africa, one of the areas that looms large in the President's Point Four Program, needs preventive medical development more than curative. In their judgment small sums spent to avoid diseases, partly by teaching hygiene and sanitation, may pay far better social dividends than extensive and perhaps unmanageable projects to train local doctors to handle them after they have been incurred.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Personnel

Vice Consul Harris H. WILLIAMS has returned to duty but unfortunately his health has deteriorated so badly that his physician has recommended that he be transferred to a more salubrious climate. Reference despatch No. 195 of April 27, 1950, in which particular emphasis was made that his transfer should become effective after his replacement would arrive due to the shortage of commissioned officers at this post.

Consul General To Visit Interior

Despite this shortage, it is advisable that the newly

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arrived Principal Officer visit some of the interior of Nigeria - the coast is so unrepresentative. Accordingly Consul General STANTON is arranging a trip by motor car to Jos which is expected to last a week and will include such important centers as Enugu, the scene of the riots in the coal mining center of Nigeria, and Ibadan where the University College is situated, while it also will mean crossing the main rivers: the Niger, the Kaduna and the Benue.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Voice of America in Nigeria

The newly instituted (March 13, 1950) radio program entitled the "Voice of America in Nigeria" has, thus far, been highly successful. This has been confirmed by the fact that representative newspapers over the country are running the lecture in lengthy summary or serialized verbatim form. The subject for the three most recent and the next two lectures is "A Factual Survey of the Negro in the United States".

Willard Quincy Stanton
American Consul General

Copy to American Embassy, London.

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